

31 August 1999

Original: English

Committee on Conferences
Substantive session

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Koji F. X. Yamagiwa (Japan)

II. Control and limitation of documentation

C. Continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Web sites

Introduction and overview

1. In paragraph 5 of resolution 53/208 C of 18 December 1998, the General Assembly stressed the need for continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Web sites, with a view to achieving equal treatment of the six official languages on those Web sites. Furthermore, in paragraph 6 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it proposals in that connection at its fifty-fourth session through the Committee on Conferences and the Committee on Information.

2. At its 416th meeting, on 21 April 1999, the Committee on Conferences decided to include in its agenda for 1999 item 3 (d), entitled "Continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Web sites".

3. The report of the Secretary-General on the continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Web sites (A/AC.198/1999/6) contained three proposals that sought to address the issue of equitable treatment of all official languages. The objective of proposal A was to achieve full parity among official languages, that of proposal B was to achieve concurrent equality among all official languages, and that of proposal C was to achieve modular parity among languages.



Discussion

4. The representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee that the Committee on Information had requested the Secretariat to further develop proposal C and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its resumed session.
5. Responding to questions raised, the representative of the Secretariat explained that proposal C would seek not parity but rather to balance the need for parity with the prudent and realistic use of resources for that purpose. The United Nations Web site would be developed in all official languages as staff and other resources permitted, and the activity would be ongoing. Proposal C would therefore seem to be the preferred option.
6. Note was taken of the explosive growth of the United Nations Web site since its formal launching in 1995.
7. The view was expressed that the methodology employed in the elaboration of the three proposals should be further refined so that the full cost of their implementation over time would be more accurately reflected.
8. It was suggested that the report of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/1999/6) might be a good basis for further discussion of the matter.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Web sites (A/AC.198/1999/6).
 10. The Committee looked forward to the additional information on the topic requested by the Committee on Information.
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